



The Town Crier

A Newsletter from the Town of Warrenton



Town of Warrenton Still Financially Strong

It's hard not to notice the many counties and communities across the region that are facing severe budget cuts. The evening news is replete with talk of budget shortages, cost cuts and public service scale-downs.

But not in Warrenton.

The Town of Warrenton continues to be one of the most fiscally responsible communities in the Commonwealth, holding to its long-held standard of high quality services at the lowest possible tax rate.

Instead of a budget deficit, Warrenton has enjoyed a budget surplus in recent years, allowing it to maintain its high level of public services without raising tax rates. In fact, Warrenton is one of the only communities that has experienced a steady decline in business and residential tax rates over the past decade. Mayor George Fitch says this is by no means an accident.

"We've worked hard to be frugal and conservative with Warrenton's finances," he said. "Many of the communities hurting right now are those that spent heavily during budget surplus years, creating more bureaucracy to be maintained during tighter times. We've done the opposite. We've maintained a surplus that does help us improve services, but we've done it in such a way that we haven't created a monster that has to be continuously fed."

Mayor Fitch says the Town's upcoming 2011 budget will show no tax or fee increases, and a surplus of at least one million dollars. And unlike other local governments, Warrenton's budget surplus will allow it to maintain the highest possible bond rating in Virginia.

"This is about the same surplus we've had for the past



several years," the Mayor said. "We plan to use some of it to reduce the debt on the WARF, and to make some capital improvements such as adding more sidewalks and walkways in our goal of making Warrenton a more walkable community."

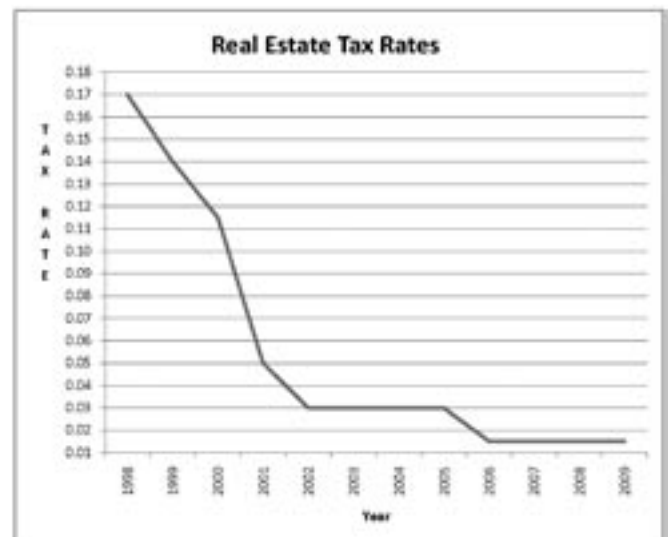
The Town of Warrenton's low tax rates are the lowest in Virginia for a full-service government. In past years real estate taxes have been lowered from 18 cents per thousand dollars of value (1998) to 1.5 cents. The Mayor says this tax cut of more than 75% in the past 12 years represents the largest tax cut in Virginia, and maybe the

entire country.

"Our strategy has been fiscal discipline," the Mayor said. "We have kept spending under control and used revenues not to enlarge government, but to give it back to taxpayers in the form of a tax reduction. If the 18-cent real estate tax were still in place, the average resident would be paying about \$300 a year in real estate taxes. But at our current reduced rate, it's more like \$50 a year."

The Mayor notes that even with these tax cuts, not a single public service has been cut or eliminated. In fact, he says they have been improved. Of recent note, he said the Town spent more to make sure that snow was removed in

Continued on page 4.



Parks and Recreation Brings Lasting Value to Warrenton

The Town of Warrenton offers a myriad of recreational opportunities. Mayor George Fitch and the Town Council are very interested in promoting a healthy lifestyle for our citizens, and have taken many steps to improve the Town's recreational offerings.

The Town's Parks and Recreation Department provides year round recreational opportunities and facilities for people of all ages, abilities and walks of life.

Four parks and an aquatics center make up the Town's recreation system, offering endless fun and fitness opportunities from soccer, softball, and volleyball to sledding in the winter and picnicking in the warmer months.

"We're very proud of our parks system," Mayor George Fitch said. "The availability of recreation and public parks allows a high quality of life here.

New businesses and residents are attracted to Warrenton because of its high quality parks and recreation facilities."

In addition to adding aesthetic beauty to Warrenton, the Town's parks also increase the value of land and property values, boost tourism, attract businesses and their employees, provide wholesome, affordable entertainment for adults, kids, and families, and ultimately help improve the overall economic health of the community.

Here's What We Have In Warrenton

The Town's parks and facilities include Rady Park, Eva Walker Park, Gold Cup Park, Academy Hill Park, and the newest addition to the Department, the Warrenton Aquatic and Recreation Facility (WARF), which opened in 2007. Within the Town limits are 43 miles of trails, walking paths and sidewalks. In addition, the Town (in cooperation with Fauquier County and the Fauquier Trails Coalition) has developed the Warrenton Branch Greenway as a combination 1.48-mile walking/biking trail and historic area along the old Warrenton Branch railroad spur line.

Rady Park is a popular local getaway spot for adults and children alike. The park, located at the intersection of Evans and Fauquier Roads in the Town of Warrenton, provides amenities for visitors of all ages, including a volleyball court and fields for soccer, baseball/softball and football. Visitors can take an early morning stroll through the park's walking paths, arboretum and community garden plots, or relax

on a bench and admire the beauty and wildlife around the park's stream. Visitors can also bring a blanket and have a picnic under a tree. Children can play and slide on the park's playground set or ride a bike on the walking

path. A pavilion is located at Rady Park, which provides the ideal setting for family picnics, outdoor education or community club meetings.

The pavilion can be reserved by contacting the Parks and Recreation Department.

Eva Walker Park, located off Alexandria Pike in Old Town, has been newly renovated by the Town of Warrenton. Children of all ages can play and have fun on the new playground sets that have been installed for 2 to 5 year olds and 5 to 12 year olds. Visitors can also walk or ride bikes through the walking

paths or shoot hoops on the park's basketball courts.

In the winter, Eva Walker Park is a popular sledding location. This Park also provides a pavilion for special events and family picnics. Again, contact the Parks and Recreation Department to verify availability and reserve it for your occasion.

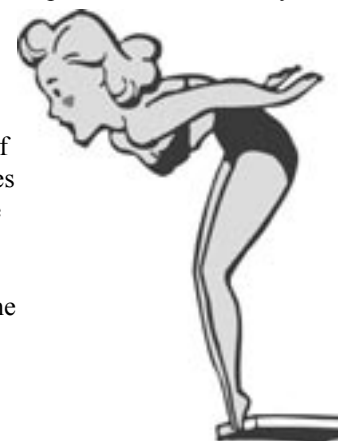
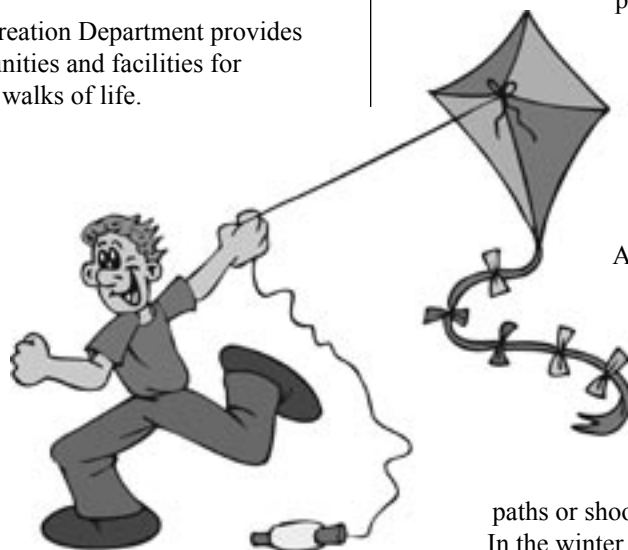
Academy Hill Park, located on Academy Hill Road in the Town of Warrenton, offers picnic tables and a baseball/softball field. Gold Cup Park, located off Gold Cup Drive, contains a playground designed for children ages 2-5 as well as a 4-person swing set.

The Crown Jewel

The latest pride of the Warrenton Parks and Recreation Department is the Warrenton Aquatic and Recreation Facility (WARF), a first-class aquatics center that is the envy of many other communities. The WARF houses an indoor 25-yard by 25-meter competition pool, leisure pool, water slides, lazy river, therapeutic spa, fitness room and more. The facility's grounds are home to a skate park, roller hockey rink and five laser-leveled Bermuda-turf soccer fields. The opportunities for recreation at the WARF are endless and are available all year round.

Since opening its doors, the WARF has greatly increased the quality and quantity of its

Continued on page 3



PARKS AND REC, Continued from page 2

programs. The facility currently offers 49 land and water group fitness classes per week, as well as seasonal specialty classes like Tai Chi and Teen Yoga. And more than 150 learn-to-swim classes are available this spring alone.

Membership numbers are continually growing. Of the over 1,400 active members, more than 400 members are from the Town of Warrenton. Members also come from Fauquier County, as well as Prince William, Loudoun, and Culpeper Counties. For those not wishing to purchase an annual membership, day passes and multi-visit passes are available for the facility. In 2009, over 42,500 day passes and over 12,800 multi-visit passes to the WARF were purchased. Attendance has grown at a rate of 16.8%.

"The WARF is an investment in the health of the community," said Warrenton Mayor George Fitch. "It provides affordable recreation for citizens in a family oriented setting. The facility serves everyone, from infants and toddlers learning water safety and basic swimming skills to Masters swimmers ranging in age from 18 to over 80 as well as the very popular water aerobics.

"Since opening, WARF revenues are growing at the rate of approximately 15% per year," the Mayor said. "This growth would not have been possible without the excellent support of our members, patrons, and the community."

The WARF hosts many groups and activities throughout the year, including those that promote swimming as a competitive sport. The center offers practice and competition pools for local public and private schools during swim season as well as year round for USA Swim Teams. These competitions offer an economic benefit to the Town of Warrenton businesses, as out-of-town teams bring in families from throughout the State of Virginia, as well as from

Maryland and Washington, D.C. During a recent U.S. Swim competition at the WARF, over 6,000 people visited the facility. Teams stayed at local hotels and patronized local stores and restaurants over the course of the weekend.

"We estimate that a family attending this meet spent approximately \$225 in the Town during the weekend," according to the staff at WARF.

"The WARF will continue to host athletic competitions which attract visitors from many areas. In the fall of 2010, we expect hundreds of athletes and their families to attend the WARF's first triathlon."

Program offerings and activities continue to grow and expand at the WARF. In two years, program offerings have doubled. Over 2,000 children have participated in learn-to-swim programs. Fitness classes that meet the needs of all ages and abilities have been added to the WARF schedule.

Local children have been provided with the opportunity to participate in year round swim teams. Boy and Girl Scout troops have enjoyed the facility while earning merit badges. In a cooperative effort with Blue Ridge Orthopedic and Spine Center, patients are able to rehabilitate in the WARF's leisure pool.

The WARF is also currently cooperating with the Fun For All Playground group to house the area's first boundless playground on its grounds. This will give children of all abilities an opportunity to play together.

"The WARF's contributions to community life are numerous and the future is bright," Mayor Fitch said. ■



So Long, Sgt. Sam

Sergeant Dewey (Sam) Tilley retired from the Warrenton Police Department in February after 25 years of service to the Town.

Sgt. Tilley began his law enforcement career with the Helotes, Texas Police Department after serving in the Air Force. He later joined the Warrenton Police Department as a patrol officer, and later served as SWAT Supervisor, detective, sergeant and motorcycle sergeant.

"Sgt. Tilley contributed greatly to the department," said Warrenton Police Chief Connie Novak. "He created several programs, including the Baton and the Oleoresin Capsicum (O.C) Spray programs. Additionally, Sergeant Tilley held several instructor certifications in general police procedures, defensive tactics, firearms and driving. He'll be missed by Town citizens, and all who worked with him." ■



Sgt. Sam Tilley (second from left) receives a retirement send-off and gifts from Town Manager Ken McLawhon (left), Major Lou Battle (second from right), and Warrenton Chief of Police Connie Novak (right.)

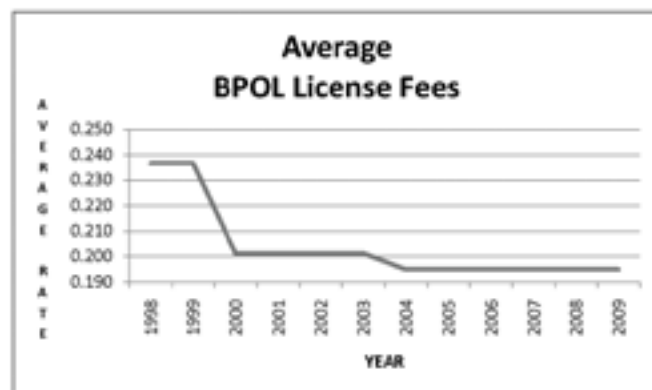
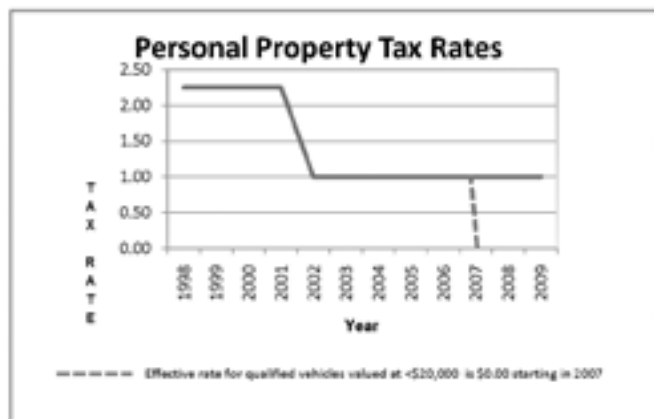
FINANCES STRONG, Continued from page 1.

record time. He said it was one of the fastest snow removals of any community in Virginia. He was quick to praise Town workers for their dedication and hard work, and was grateful that the Town had surplus funds to allow the speedy removal of snow.

"In addition to lower real estate taxes, we've also reduced business (BPOL) taxes by 20%, and have completely eliminated personal property tax on vehicles valued at less than \$20,000," Mayor Fitch said. "And we've reduced by half the vehicle decal fee for our senior citizens," he added.

Mayor Fitch says he's proud of the outstanding job the Town of Warrenton has done to keep its expenses low, services high and spare cash on hand. The 2011 budget will maintain full staffing for the Warrenton Police Department as well as for other public services departments in the Town.

"We will continue to provide for our citizens and businesses a safe community with a high quality of life without raising taxes," the Mayor said. ■



Holiday Refuse Collection Schedule

Memorial Day — May 31

Monday, 5/31/10 — Holiday; no refuse collection

Tuesday, 6/1/10 — Double refuse collection

(Both Monday's & Tuesday's)

Wednesday, 6/2/10 — Regular recycling collection

(cardboard, newspaper & blue bags)

Thursday, 6/3/10 — Regular refuse collection

Friday, 6/4/10 — Regular refuse collection

Independence Day — July 4

Monday, 7/5/10 — Holiday; no refuse collection

Tuesday, 7/6/10 — Double refuse collection

(Both Monday's & Tuesday's)

Wednesday, 7/7/10 — Regular recycling collection

(cardboard, newspaper & blue bags)

Thursday, 7/8/10 — Regular refuse collection

Friday, 7/9/10 — Regular refuse collection

Labor Day — September 6

Monday, 9/6/10 — Holiday; no refuse collection

Tuesday, 9/7/10 — Double refuse collection

(Both Monday's & Tuesday's)

Wednesday, 9/8/10 — Regular recycling collection

(cardboard, newspaper & blue bags)

Thursday, 9/9/10 — Regular refuse collection

Friday, 9/10/10 — Regular refuse collection

For your convenience, during the holidays there will be a refuse truck available at the Public Works Facility (360 Falmouth Street). ■

Warrenton Celebrates Arbor Day

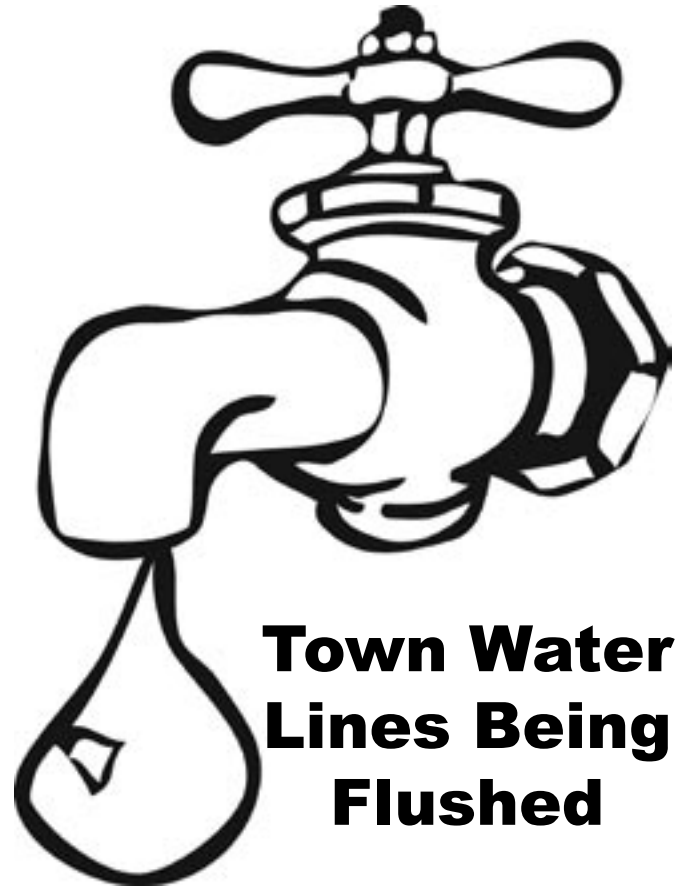
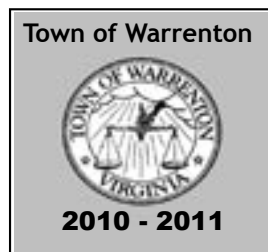
Part of the charm of historic Warrenton is its lovely trees. They add to the beauty and quality of life in Town, and are worth celebrating.

The Town of Warrenton and the Warrenton Tree Board celebrated Arbor Day Saturday, March 27 with a big shindig at the WARF. People gathered to help plant 35 tree seedlings. These seedlings are the start of a Town nursery, and will grow here until they are needed elsewhere throughout the Town. The trees planted included bald cypress, river birch, redbud, white oak, willow oak, red maple, and hackberry -- all trees on the Town's list of acceptable tree species (Article 8-7 of the Zoning Ordinance). ■



Avoid Sticker Shock (i.e., a costly ticket)

As of March 15 there should be a new Town of Warrenton decal in the window of your motor vehicle. And you could receive a ticket if your sticker is missing or out of date. The Warrenton Town Code requires that Town residents renew or obtain a town decal by March 15 of the current year. You should stick the sticker on the windshield of your vehicle, immediately to the right of your state inspection sticker. ■



Town Water Lines Being Flushed

The Town of Warrenton Utilities Department started its bi-annual flushing of the water lines on March 22. Flushing will continue through the end of April. This is a standard maintenance practice that takes place twice a year to clear the water lines of any sediment, and to inspect and exercise water valves and fire hydrants.

To minimize inconvenience to citizens, the flushing will take place during non-peak water usage times (7:00 PM to 1:00 AM).

If you experience any discoloration of your water, such as a rusty or brownish color, this can normally be resolved by running your cold water until it clears. This process usually takes two to seven minutes. Don't run the hot water to clear up the water. This only allows the discolored water to enter the hot water tank.

If after all attempts have been made to clear up the water it is still discolored, please contact Warrenton Utilities Superintendent Richard Wines at (540) 347-1858 and a service person will respond to determine if problems exist. ■



HAPPY SPRING!

Brush Up On the Brush Policy



After a wild and windy winter, many trees have lost branches and limbs. And now that warmer temperatures have arrived, you may be cleaning up the damage around your house. What do you do with all those branches? Fortunately, the Town of Warrenton makes it easy for you. Each spring the Town offers a special brush and limb collection to help you undo what Mother Nature did to your yard during the winter.

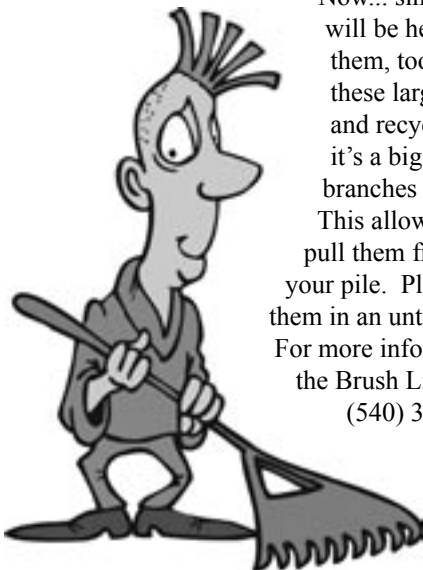
The brush and limb collection is a residential collection only, and it's just for larger limbs - in fact, don't cut them up... the longer the limbs the better. Town crews can take limbs up to 9" in diameter. All small limbs, twigs, twigs, clippings, vines, grass and weeds should be placed in bags and included with your regular household refuse. Limbs that are too small for the chipper, yet too big to place in bags, can be bundled and tied up with string and set out with your refuse.

Here are some "no-nos" for the brush and limb collection: no logs, stumps, rocks or dirt can be taken. Also, if you hire a contractor or a landscaping company to do tree trimming, it's the company's responsibility to dispose of the trimmings. The Town will not take this stuff.

If you're thinking, "Great, how do I get in on this brush and limb collection?" it's easy. There's no special schedule for the added collection. The Town offers this service as time allows. Just place your limbs and branches by the road to make it easier to collect, and then call Public Works to get on the Brush List. Then Town workers will get your brush at their first chance.

Now... since the Town workers will be helping you, you can help them, too. They'll be feeding these large limbs into a chipper and recycling them for mulch, so it's a big help of you stack your branches in the same direction. This allows the workers to easily pull them from the same end of your pile. Please don't just throw them in an untidy pile.

For more information, or to get on the Brush List, call Public Works at (540) 347-1858. ■



The Town's annual Spring Clean-Up Week is scheduled for the week of April 19-23. Town trucks will provide extra collections in all residential areas to pick up trash, refuse and other items that cannot be handled on the regular weekly schedule. Please place all items on the street line by 8:00 AM of the day scheduled for your area. No return trips can be made. All trash and refuse must be placed in proper containers. Here's a guide to what can and can't be taken:

Household Junk

Town crews can take almost anything, but please separate all wood and metal into separate piles. No hazardous chemicals can be picked up, including liquid paint. If you have empty paint cans, just place them out with your regular trash.

If you have an appliance containing Freon that you want to get rid of, crews can take it, but you'll have to pay a \$10 fee. This is what it costs the Fauquier County Landfill to drain the Freon and recycle the item. Items that contain Freon include air conditioning and dehumidifying units, refrigerators and freezers.

To get rid of these items, you'll have to call Public Works in advance and pay the fee to make arrangements for the pick-up. If you set a refrigerator or freezer out for collection, please remove the door. This is not just for child safety, but the Landfill requires it. Call Public Works to arrange your pickup. (540) 347-1858.

The Town no longer picks up TV's, computer monitors, copiers, fax machines, microwaves or paint. Take them to the Landfill for recycling. The Landfill requires a fee for some of these items.

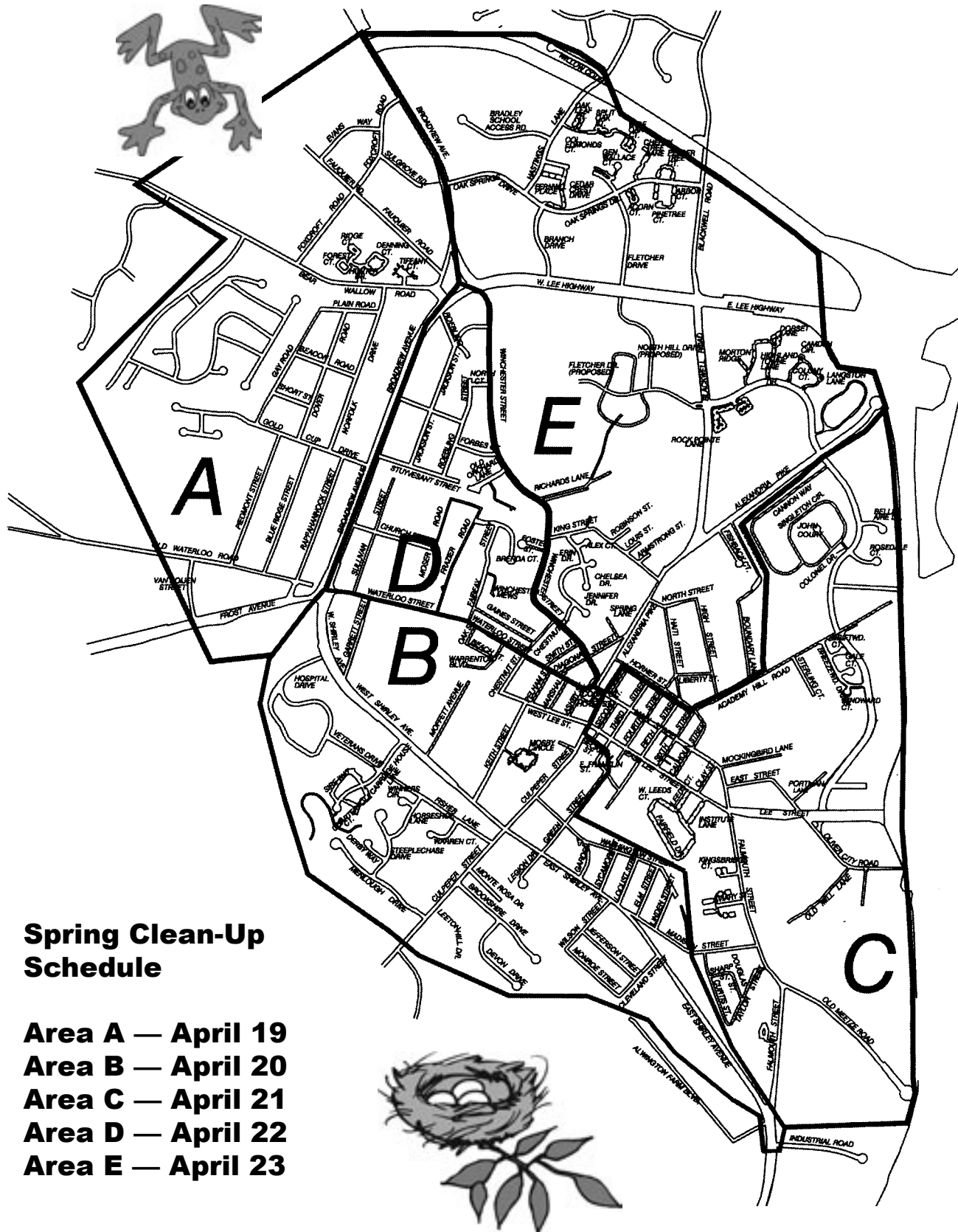
Yard Waste

Town crews cannot pick up dirt, rocks, sod, old stumps and large logs. They will take tree trimmings and brush, if you place them separately. Small clippings from bushes or shrubs should be bagged and placed with regular refuse. (For large limbs and branches, see the story on the Town's special Brush and Limb Collection).

If your efforts to beautify your yard include the services of tree contractors, remember that it's their job to haul away the refuse. ■

See Spring Cleaning Area Map on Page 7.

Town Map for Spring Clean-Up Week



Spring Clean-Up Schedule

- Area A — April 19**
- Area B — April 20**
- Area C — April 21**
- Area D — April 22**
- Area E — April 23**



Town Office Hours and Telephone Numbers

Town Office Hours are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

The area code is 540 unless otherwise noted.

Finance Department.....	347-1102
Inspections	347-2405
Maintenance Shop.....	347-1858
Police Department	
Office of the Chief	347-1105
Police Station	347-1107
Non-emergency	347-1100
Emergency	911
Planning and Zoning	347-2405
Recreation Department (Aquatic Center)	349-2520
Recycling	347-1858
Sewage Plant.....	347-1104
Town Hall.....	347-1101
Town Manager	347-4505
Utilities.....	347-6574
Water Bills	347-2678
Water Plant.....	347-1103
TTD/TTY	1-800-828-1120

**After Hours Water and Sewer Emergency
347-1100**

Please Be Polite!

With the return of spring after a particularly hard winter, everyone has long awaited mild weather and the spring time aromas. This includes not just us humans, but also our pets that have been cooped up for the past 3 months.

The only down side of this time of year is the calling cards left by our pets. No pleasant aroma there!

Everyone is pretty much in agreement that there is no controlling a cat, but dogs are another matter. So as you and your canine family members go for a spring time stroll, think ahead and take along a small plastic/paper bag so you can return home with all you left with. Your neighbors and fellow pet owners will greatly appreciate your consideration.

Woof! ■



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TOWN COUNCIL

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The Town Crier

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